

## REMARKS

### I. Introduction

The Examiner issued a restriction requirement on this application, but examined claims 1-64 in response to a provisional election of those claims. Applicants have amended claims 1, 7-12, 16-19, 23, 24, 30-35, 39-42, 46, 47, 49, 55, 57, 63, and 64 to more particularly define the invention. Claims 75-132 have been added. Annexed hereto is an Appendix showing the changes to the amended claims. Reconsideration of this application in light of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

### II. The Restriction Requirement

The Examiner stated that a restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. § 121. The Examiner stated that the application has the following allegedly patentable distinct inventions:

Group I: Claims 1-64; and

Group II: Claims 65-74.

The Examiner also stated that applicants are required to elect one of Groups I and II for prosecution under 35 U.S.C. § 121. In a telephone conversation between Mr. Andrew Van Court and the Examiner on March 26, 2002, a provisional election was made without traverse to prosecute Group I, claims 1-64. Applicants hereby affirm the election of Group I, claims 1-64 without traverse.

The Examiner withdrew claims 65-74 from further consideration under 37 CFR § 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention. However, applicants reserve the right to file the non-elected claims in subsequent divisional or continuing applications that claim priority and benefit from this application.

### III. The Rejections Based on 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1-5, 13-15, 18, 20-28, 36-38, 41, 43-52, and 55-60 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Carr et al. US Patent 6,209,129 (hereinafter "Carr"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection in view of the amendments to independent claims 1, 24, 47, and 55.

#### III.1 Reply to Rejection of Claims 1 and 24

Applicants' invention, as defined by amended independent claims 1 and 24, relates to a system and method for distributing local advertisements to user television equipment. The local advertisements are displayed using an interactive television program guide. The interactive television program guide is implemented on the user television equipment and processes a data stream to extract the local advertisements. The extracted local advertisements are then displayed by the interactive television program guide on the user equipment. The local

advertisements that are displayed on the user television equipment are specific to a subset of interactive television program guide users. Moreover, applicant's invention also allows a user to select a displayed local advertisement using the interactive television program guide.

Carr "relates to passive television program guides, and more particularly, to techniques for providing local information with such passive television program guides" (column 1, lines 7-11). These techniques include gathering local information such as advertisements and information about local events such as concerts and shows into a central location. From this central location, the local information is transmitted to user television equipment on which a passive program guide displays the information. As defined in Carr, a passive program guide system provides users with program guide information, promotional information, and regional advertising without requiring that the user have any special television equipment other than a standard television. That is, passive program guides provide information to the user without requiring or enabling a user to interact with the guide.

While Carr discloses the distribution of local advertisements to user television equipment, it does not teach the specific improvement of displaying local advertisements that are selectable using an interactive television program guide. Carr also does not teach the

specific improvement of using an interactive television program guide to process a data stream to obtain local advertisements, which are displayed by the interactive television program guide. Rather Carr displays the local information with a passive television program guide, not an interactive television program guide. For example, column 4, lines 65-67 of Carr states that "television distribution equipment [is] configured to use a passive television program guide to display the local information on the user television equipment."

Accordingly, applicants submit that independent claims 1 and 24 are not anticipated by Carr. Applicants also submit that claims 2-23 and 24-46 are not anticipated by Carr because they depend from claims 1 and 24, respectively.

### III.2 Reply to Rejection of Claims 47 and 55

Applicants' invention, as defined by amended independent claims 47 and 55, is directed to distributing advertisements to user television equipment. The distributed advertisements include associated content tags that define the content of the advertisements. An interactive television program guide, which is implemented on the user television equipment, processes the content tags and displays only some of the advertisements on the user television equipment based on the processed content tags.

Carr refers to an arrangement in which local information is distributed to television distribution facilities for transmission to user television equipment. A front end database is provided for storing local information submitted by "partners." A front end data manager is used to periodically access the front end database to retrieve and transmit the local information to a back end data manager. The back end data manager transmits the local information it receives from the front end data manager to a back end database for storage. From the back end database, the local information is provided to television distribution facilities. The local information is used by a passive television program guide that displays the local information for viewing by a user at user television equipment.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has misconstrued the teachings of Carr in contending that Carr anticipates applicants' claims 47 and 55. In particular, the Examiner relies on column 1, lines 19-28 of Carr. This portion of Carr discloses that advertising videos and associated text descriptions are displayed in the passive program guide. Carr further discloses that the content of the text descriptions can be targeted towards particular regions of the passive program guide. This targeting feature merely suggests that the text can be positioned in certain locations of the display screen. While Carr discloses a targeting technique for displaying

text descriptions in particular sections of a program guide, this does not anticipate applicants' use of an interactive television program guide to process content tags to determine which advertisements are suitable for display on the user equipment.

Content tags, as defined in independent claims 47 and 55 may be used illustratively as follows. Content tags may be provided to identify advertisements that have graphic language, violence, and sexual content. Depending on user preferences or other factors, advertisements that have such content tags may be blocked and are not displayed, so the sensibilities of that user is not offended. If desired a suitable advertisement can be displayed in place of the advertisement that was blocked. Hence, it is apparent that applicants' invention, as defined by independent claims 47 and 55, is not directed to targeting text descriptions to particular regions of the passive program guide as disclosed by Carr.

Accordingly, applicants submit that independent claims 47 and 55 are not anticipated by Carr. Applicants also submit that claims 48-54 and 56-62 are allowable because they depend from claims 47 and 55, respectively.

III.3 Reply to Rejections of Claims 6-8, 12,  
29-31, and 35

Claims 6-8, 12, 29-31, and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Berezowski et al. US Patent 6,075,551 (hereinafter "Berezowski"). In rejecting claims 6-8, 12, 29-31, and 35, the Examiner also contends that Berezowski anticipates applicants' independent claims 1 and 24. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

As stated above, applicant's invention, as defined by amended claims 1 and 24, relates to a system and method for distributing local advertisements to user television equipment. The local advertisements are displayed using an interactive television program guide. The interactive television program guide is implemented on the user television equipment and processes a data stream to extract the local advertisements. The extracted local advertisements are then displayed by the interactive television program guide. The local advertisements that are displayed on the user television equipment are specific to a subset of interactive television program guide users. Moreover, applicants' invention also allows a user to select a displayed local advertisement using the interactive television program guide.

Berezowski "relates to video promotion systems such as those containing electronic television program guide

services. More particularly, the invention relates to video promotion systems in which globally distributed promotional information may periodically be replaced with locally inserted promotional information" (column 1, lines 6-12). The local promotional information can be inserted at a television distribution facility and then distributed to user television equipment over a dedicated channel for display in a passive program guide. Specifically, Berezowski states that a "television distribution facility 20, which is preferably a cable system headend, distributes conventional television channels and a dedicated promotional video channel to television units 24 over television distribution links 26" (column 4, lines 34-38).

While Berezowski discloses a system that allows for insertion of local advertisements which are distributed to user television equipment, it does not show the specific improvement of providing a user with an opportunity to select a local advertisement with the interactive television program guide. Berezowski also does not show the specific improvement of using an interactive television program guide to process a data stream to extract local advertisements that are displayed on the user equipment.

Accordingly, applicants submit that independent claims 1 and 24 are not anticipated by Berezowski. Applicants also submit that claims 2-23, which depend from



claim 1, and claims 25-46, which depend from claim 24 are not anticipated by Berezowski.

IV. Reply to Rejections of Claims 9-11 and 32-34  
Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 9-11 and 32-34 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Berezowski. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

IV.1 Reply to the Rejection of Claims 9 and 32

Regarding claims 9 and 32, the Examiner has conceded that Berezowski does not show the features of transmitting a global data stream comprising bandwidth reserved for local advertisements to a television distribution facility, and inserting the local advertisements into the global data stream in the reserved bandwidth at the television distribution facility. However, the Examiner has taken Official Notice that such features are well known in the art. The Examiner therefore contends that "it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Berezowski with a well-known technique of providing a bandwidth reserved for local advertisements in order to avoid interfering while the global stream is transmitted to the television distribution facility" (Office Action, page 13, last sentence).

Claims 9 and 32 are patentable at least because they depend from claims 1 and 24, respectively. Claims 9 and 32 are also patentable because they add features to their respective base claims that further define how local advertisements are distributed to user television equipment.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's Official Notice is not justified. "The Examiner may take Official Notice of facts outside of the record which are capable of instant and unquestionable demonstration as being "'well known'" in the art" (MPEP § 2144.03). The features added to independent claims 1 and 24, which include transmitting a global data stream comprising bandwidth reserved for local advertisements to a television distribution facility, and inserting the local advertisements into the global data stream in the reserved bandwidth at the distribution facility, are not well known in the art. Moreover, the features defined by claims 9 and 32 are not representative of knowledge that is of notorious character, but are representative of knowledge that is novel, and does not justify the Examiner's use of Official Notice. Therefore, according to MPEP § 2144.03, applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner is required to cite a reference to support the Official Notice used in rejecting claims 9 and 32.

Accordingly, claims 9 and 32 are patentable and nonobvious in light of Berezowski.

#### IV.2 Reply to the Rejection of claims 10 and 33

Regarding claims 10 and 33, the Examiner concedes that Berezowski fails to disclose transmitting a global data stream comprising slots reserved for local advertisements to a television distribution facility, and inserting the local advertisements into the global data stream in the reserved slots at the television distribution facility (Office Action, page 14, first paragraph). However, the Examiner has taken Official Notice that using a reserved slot for local advertisements in a global data stream is well known in the art for allowing local operators to insert local advertisements at the television distribution facility. Thus, the Examiner contends that such features would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Berezowski to obtain applicants' claimed invention.

Claims 10 and 33 are patentable at least because they depend from claims 1 and 24, respectively. Claims 10 and 33 are also patentable because they add features to their respective base claims that further define features for distributing the local advertisements.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's Official Notice is not justified. "The Examiner may take Official Notice of facts outside of the record which are capable of instant and unquestionable demonstration as being "'well known'" in the art" (MPEP § 2144.03). The features

added to independent claims 1 and 24, which include transmitting a global data stream comprising slots reserved for local advertisements to a television distribution facility, and inserting the local advertisements into the global data stream in the reserved slots at the television distribution facility, are not well known in the art. Moreover, the features defined by claims 10 and 33 are not representative of knowledge that is of notorious character, but are representative of knowledge that is novel, and does not justify the Examiner's use of Official Notice. Therefore, according to MPEP § 2144.03, applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner is required to cite a reference to support the Official Notice used in rejecting claims 10 and 33.

Accordingly, claims 10 and 33 are patentable and nonobvious in light of Berezowski.

#### IV.3 Reply to the Rejection of claims 11 and 34

Regarding claims 11 and 34, the Examiner contends that these claims correspond to the combination of elements being claimed in claims 8 and 9, and 31 and 32, respectively. Thus, the Examiner rejects claims 11 and 34 based on the rejections of claims 8 and 9, and 31 and 32, respectively.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 11 and 34 are not a combination of elements as being claimed in

claims 8 and 9, and 31 and 32, respectively. For example, claim 11 defines the feature of transmitting the local advertisements and the global advertisements from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment as part of the global data stream. Claims 8 and 9 define a feature in which only the local advertisements are distributed to the user television equipment as part of the global data stream. Hence, claim 11 is not a mere duplication of the features disclosed in claims 8 and 9 and is therefore not subject to the same rejections as claims 8 and 9.

Accordingly, claims 11 and 34 are patentable and nonobvious in light of Berezowski.

V. Reply to Rejection of Claims 16, 17,  
19, 39, 40, and 42 Under 35 U.S.C § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 16, 17, 19, 39, 40, and 42 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Carr. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

V.1 Reply to the Rejection of Claims 16 and 39

The Examiner has conceded that Carr does not disclose the features of displaying global advertisements that may be selected by a user with the interactive television program guide, and for displaying corresponding local advertisements that may be selected whenever the user selects the global

advertisements. However, the Examiner has taken Official Notice that such features are well known in the art. The Examiner therefore contends that "it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time to modify Carr" to obtain applicants' invention as defined by claims 16 and 39 (Office Action, page 15, lines 11-12).

Claims 16 and 39 are patentable at least because they depend from claims 1 and 24, respectively. Claims 16 and 39 are also patentable because they add features to their respective base claims that further define how local advertisements are distributed to user television equipment.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's Official Notice is not justified. "The Examiner may take Official Notice of facts outside of the record which are capable of instant and unquestionable demonstration as being "'well known'" in the art" (MPEP § 2144.03). The features added to independent claims 1 and 24, which include displaying global advertisements that may be selected by a user with the interactive television program guide, and for displaying corresponding local advertisements that may be selected whenever the user selects the global advertisements, are not well known in the art. Moreover, the features defined by claims 16 and 39 are not representative of knowledge that is of notorious character, but are representative of knowledge that is novel, and does not justify the Examiner's use of Official Notice.

Therefore, according to MPEP § 2144.03, applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner is required to cite a reference to support the Official Notice used in rejecting claims 16 and 39.

Accordingly, claims 16 and 39 are patentable and nonobvious in light of Carr.

V.2 Reply to the Rejection of Claims 17 and 40

Referring to the rejections of claim 17 and 40, the Examiner has conceded that Carr fails to disclose the feature of displaying a corresponding full-screen local advertisement whenever the user selects a global advertisement. However, the Examiner has taken Official Notice that such features are well known in the art. The Examiner therefore contends that "it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time to modify Carr" to obtain applicants' invention as defined by claims 17 and 40 (Office Action, page 16, lines 3-4).

Claims 17 and 40 are patentable at least because they depend from claims 1 and 24, respectively. Claims 17 and 40 are also patentable because they add features to their respective base claims that further define how local advertisements are distributed to user television equipment.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's Official Notice is not justified. "The Examiner may take Official Notice of facts outside of the record which are

capable of instant and unquestionable demonstration as being "'well known'" in the art" (MPEP § 2144.03). The features added to independent claims 1 and 24, which include displaying a corresponding full-screen local advertisement whenever the user selects a global advertisement, are not well known in the art. Moreover, the features defined by claims 17 and 40 are not representative of knowledge that is of notorious character, but are representative of knowledge that is novel, and does not justify the Examiner's use of Official Notice. Therefore, according to MPEP § 2144.03, applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner is required to cite a reference to support the Official Notice used in rejecting claims 17 and 40.

Accordingly, claims 17 and 40 are patentable and nonobvious in light of Carr.

### V.3 Reply to the Rejection of Claims 19 and 42

The Examiner concedes that Carr fails to disclose the feature of displaying global banner advertisements with the interactive television program guide; and for cycling the display of the global banner advertisements and the local advertisements. However, the Examiner has taken Official Notice that such features are well known in the art. The Examiner therefore contends that "it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time



to modify Carr" to obtain applicants' invention as defined by claims 19 and 42 (Office Action, page 16, lines 17-18).

Claims 19 and 42 are patentable at least because they depend from claims 1 and 24, respectively. Claims 19 and 42 are also patentable because they add features to their respective base claims that further define how local advertisements are distributed to user television equipment.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner's Official Notice is not justified. "The Examiner may take Official Notice of facts outside of the record which are capable of instant and unquestionable demonstration as being "'well known'" in the art" (MPEP § 2144.03). The features added to independent claims 1 and 24, which include displaying global banner advertisements with the interactive television program guide, and for cycling the display of the global banner advertisements and the local advertisements, are not well known in the art. The features defined by claims 19 and 42 are not representative of knowledge that is of notorious character, but are representative of knowledge that is novel, and does not justify the Examiner's use of Official Notice. Therefore, according to MPEP § 2144.03, applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner is required to cite a reference to support the Official Notice used in rejecting claims 19 and 42.

Accordingly, claims 19 and 42 are patentable and nonobvious in light of Carr.

VI. Reply to the Rejection of Claims 63 and 64  
under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 63 and 64 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Carr and in view of Banker et al. U.S. Patent 5,357,276 (hereinafter "Banker"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant's invention, as defined by independent claims 63 and 64, relates to a system and method for distributing advertisements, time-shifting the distributed advertisements and displaying the time-shifted advertisements. Particularly, this system and method is directed towards distributing advertisements to the television distribution facility, which time-shifts at least some of the advertisements. The time-shifted advertisements are then displayed by an interactive television program guide implemented on user television equipment. The interactive television program guide also allows the user to select the time-shifted advertisements.

Displaying time-shifted advertisements enables advertisements to better reach their intended audience (e.g., by providing advertisements at peak viewing time slots when they would otherwise be displayed during off-peak viewing time slots). For example, a network television program may be broadcast at 8:00 PM eastern time and 7:00 PM mountain time (even though eastern time and mountain time are two time zones apart). If an advertisement is

distributed nationally and aired just before 8:00 PM eastern time (e.g., at 7:55 PM eastern time), that advertisement (if not time shifted) will be aired at 5:55 PM mountain time. This may be undesirable, because a 5:55 PM advertisement for a 7:00 PM television program may not be as effective as a 6:55 PM advertisement for a 7:00 PM television program. Accordingly, in this situation it may be desirable to delay (time shift) the display of the 5:55 PM mountain time advertisement until 6:55 PM mountain time.

The Examiner contends that Carr discloses a system and method in which local advertisements are distributed to user television equipment and displayed by an interactive television program guide, which is implemented on the user television equipment. However, Carr does not show such a system or method in which local advertisements are displayed by an interactive television program guide. Carr discloses, among other features, a system that displays local advertisements with a passive television program guide. There is no mention of using an interactive television program guide to display local advertisements. There is also no mention of using the interactive television program guide to provide interactive services which allows a user to select time-shifted advertisements.

The Examiner concedes that Carr fails to show the features of time-shifting at least some of the advertisements with the television distribution facility,

and displaying the time-shifted advertisements with the interactive television program guide. These features are said to be shown by Banker.

Banker relates to "a time shifting feature for a subscriber terminal which is capable of receiving a plurality of [near video on demand] NVOD channels from a programming source" (column 2, lines 42-44). In particular, Banker discloses a time shifting feature that provides operations that "emulate the functions of pause, fast-forward and rewind of a video cassette recorder" (column 2, lines 47-48). NVOD programming generally starts in successive time periods (e.g., 5:55, 6:00, 6:05, etc.). Thus, Banker shows moving between portions of NVOD programming to emulate video cassette recorder functions. For example, if a user fast forwards a NVOD program, the system of Banker time shifts to a NVOD program that started at a time period earlier than the currently viewed program.

Neither Carr nor Banker show the features of distributing advertisements to a television distribution facility, time-shifting at least some of the advertisements with the television distribution facility, displaying the time-shifted advertisements with the interactive television program guide, and providing interactive services to a user such that the user can select the time-shifted advertisements. Therefore, whether taken alone or in

combination, both Carr and Banker fail to show all the features of applicants' claimed invention.

Moreover, there is no prior art motivation to combine Carr and Banker. The Examiner states that it would have obvious to modify Carr's technique of displaying local advertisements with a passive television program guide with Banker's technique of emulating video cassette recorder (VCR) functions by time shifting NVOD programming. Because Carr does not show the use of an interactive television program guide to display time-shifted advertisements or to allow a user to select time-shifted advertisements, there can be no motivation of this sort to use the teaching of Banker in combination with Carr.

In fact, Carr teaches away from using time shifting to emulate VCR functions. Carr shows a "passive program guide system in which users may be provided with local programming" (column 1, lines 36-39). Carr shows that the passive program guide system has television distribution facilities that use a global data stream to generate a passive television program guide, which is displayed on a dedicated television channel. Carr shows a system and method that facilitates the incorporation of local programming data into the global data to display local information in a passive television program guides, thereby teaching away from Banker's time shifting feature for emulating VCR functions for VOD programming.

The Examiner has therefore failed to show any motivation for combining Carr and Banker, and the prior art teaches away from making such a combination. Accordingly, claims 63 and 64 are patentable over Carr and Banker.

#### VII. New Claims

New claims 75-132 have been added. In general, independent claim 75 is directed to a system for displaying local advertisements and independent claim 95 is directed to a machine readable medium encoded with machine-readable instructions to display local advertisements. Similar to amended claims 1 and 24, in new independent claims 75 and 95, local advertisements are distributed to user television equipment as part of a data stream, wherein the local advertisements are specific to a subset of interactive television program guide users, the interactive television program guide is used to process the data stream to obtain the local advertisements, the interactive television program guide displays the local advertisements and provides a user with an opportunity to use the interactive television program guide to select the local advertisements.

Therefore, new independent claims 75 and 95, and dependent claims 76-94 and 96-117, are allowable for similar reasons as to why claims 1 and 24 are allowable.

In general, independent claim 118 is directed to a system for distributing advertisements that include content

tags to user television equipment and independent claim 124 is directed to a machine readable medium encoded with machine-readable instructions for use in a system in which advertisements are distributed to user television equipment on which an interactive television program guide is implemented. Similar to amended claims 47 and 55, in new independent claims 118 and 124, advertisements having associated content tags that define the content of the advertisements are distributed to user television equipment, an interactive television program guide processes the content tags, the interactive television program guide displays only some of the advertisements based on the processed content tags. Therefore, new independent claims 118 and 124, and dependent claims 119-123 and 125-130, are allowable for similar reasons as to why claims 47 and 55 are allowable.

In general, independent claim 131 is directed to a system for distributing advertisements to user television equipment and independent claim 132 is directed to a machine readable medium encoded with machine-readable instructions for use in a system in which advertisements are distributed to user television equipment on which an interactive television program guide is implemented. Similar to amended claims 63 and 64, in new independent claims 131 and 132, advertisements are distributed to a television distribution facility, which time-shifts at least some of the

advertisements. An interactive television program guide displays the time-shifted advertisements and provides interactive services to a user such that the user can select the time-shifted advertisements. Therefore, new independent claims 131 and 132 are allowable for similar reasons as to why claims 63 and 64 are allowable.

VII. Conclusion

The foregoing demonstrates that claims 1-64 and 75-132 are allowable. Applicants respectfully submit that this patent application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alex Shvarts", is written over a horizontal line.

Alexander Shvarts  
Registration No. 47,943  
Agent for Applicants  
FISH & NEAVE  
Customer No. 1473  
1251 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, New York 10020  
Tel.: (212) 596-9000





## APPENDIX

Showing the changes to the amended claims  
New claims 75-132 have been added

Claims 1, 7-12, 16-19, 23, 24, 30-35, 39-42, 46, 47, 49, 55, 57, 63, and 64 have been amended as follows:

1. (Amended) A system in which local advertisements are distributed to user television equipment on which an interactive television program guide is implemented, comprising:

means for distributing local advertisements to the user television equipment as part of a data stream, wherein the local advertisements are specific to a subset of interactive television program guide users; [and]

means for using the interactive television program guide to process the data stream to obtain the local advertisements;

means for [displaying the local advertisements with] using the interactive television program guide to display the local advertisements; and

means for providing a user with an opportunity to use the interactive television program guide to select the local advertisements.

7. (Amended) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the means for distributing the local advertisements further comprises:

means for transmitting a global data stream [containing] comprising global advertisements to a television distribution facility;

means for inserting the local advertisements into the global data stream at the television distribution facility; and

means for transmitting the local advertisements from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment as part of the global data stream.

8. (Amended) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the means for distributing the local advertisements further comprises:

means for transmitting a global data stream [containing] comprising global advertisements to a television distribution facility;

means for inserting the local advertisements into the global data stream by overwriting the global advertisements at the television distribution facility; and

means for transmitting the local advertisements from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment as part of the global data stream.

9. (Amended) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the means for distributing the local advertisements further comprises:

means for transmitting a global data stream [containing] comprising bandwidth reserved for local advertisements to a television distribution facility;

means for inserting the local advertisements into the global data stream in the reserved bandwidth at the television distribution facility; and

means for transmitting the local advertisements from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment as part of the global data stream.

10. (Amended) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the means for distributing the local advertisements further comprises:

means for transmitting a global data stream [containing] comprising slots reserved for local advertisements to a television distribution facility;

means for inserting the local advertisements into the global data stream in the reserved slots at the television distribution facility; and

means for transmitting the local advertisements from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment as part of the global data stream.

11. (Amended) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the means for distributing the local advertisements further comprises:

means for transmitting a global data stream [containing] comprising global advertisements and having bandwidth reserved for local advertisements to a television distribution facility;

means for inserting the local advertisements into the global data stream in the reserved bandwidth at the television distribution facility; and

means for transmitting the local advertisements and the global advertisements from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment as part of the global data stream.

12. (Amended) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the means for distributing the local advertisements further comprises:

means for transmitting a global data stream [containing] comprising global advertisements to a television distribution facility;

means for transmitting the global data stream from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment; and

means for transmitting the local advertisements from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment as a separate data stream from the global data stream.

16. (Amended) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the means for [displaying the local advertisements with] using the interactive television program guide to display the local advertisements further comprises:

means for displaying a global advertisement that may be selected by a user with the interactive television program guide; and

means for displaying a corresponding local advertisement with content related to the content of the global advertisement whenever the user selects the global advertisement.

17. (Amended) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the means for [displaying the local advertisements with] using the interactive television program guide to display the local advertisements further comprises:

means for displaying a global advertisement that may be selected by a user with the interactive television program guide; and

means for displaying a corresponding full-screen local advertisement whenever the user selects the global advertisement.

18. (Amended) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the means for [displaying the local advertisements with] using the interactive television program guide to display the local advertisements further comprises:

means for displaying global advertisements with the interactive television program guide; and

means for cycling the display of the global advertisements and the local advertisements.

19. (Amended) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the means for [displaying the local advertisements with] using the interactive television program guide to display the local advertisements further comprises:

means for displaying global banner advertisements with the interactive television program guide; and

means for cycling the display of the global banner advertisements and the local advertisements.

23. (Amended) The system defined in claim 1 wherein the means for distributing the local advertisements further comprises:

means for transmitting global advertisements and program guide information to a television distribution facility;

means for providing local advertisements at the television distribution facility;

means for transmitting the program guide information, the global advertisements, and the local advertisements from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment;

means for displaying the global advertisements with the interactive television program guide; and

means for displaying a program listings region [containing] comprising the program guide information with the interactive television program guide.

24. (Amended) A method for using a system in which local advertisements are distributed to user television equipment on which an interactive television program guide is implemented, comprising the steps of:

distributing the local advertisements to the user television equipment as part of a data stream, wherein said local advertisements are specific to a subset of interactive television program guide users; [and]

using the interactive television program guide to process the data stream to obtain the local advertisements;

[displaying the local advertisements with] using the interactive television program guide to display the local advertisements; and

providing a user with an opportunity to use the interactive television program guide to select the local advertisements.

30. (Amended) The method defined in claim 24 wherein the step of distributing the local advertisements further comprises the steps of:

transmitting a global data stream [containing] comprising global advertisements to a television distribution facility;

inserting the local advertisements into the global data stream at the television distribution facility; and

transmitting the local advertisements from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment as part of the global data stream.

31. (Amended) The method defined in claim 24 wherein the step of distributing the local advertisements further comprises the steps of:

transmitting a global data stream [containing] comprising global advertisements to a television distribution facility;

inserting the local advertisements into the global data stream at the television distribution facility by overwriting the global advertisements; and

transmitting the local advertisements from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment as part of the global data stream.

32. (Amended) The method defined in claim 24 wherein the step of distributing the local advertisements further comprises the steps of:

transmitting a global data stream [containing] comprising bandwidth reserved for local advertisements to a television distribution facility;

inserting the local advertisements into the global data stream in the reserved bandwidth at the television distribution facility; and

transmitting the local advertisements from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment as part of the global data stream.

33. (Amended) The method defined in claim 24 wherein the step of distributing the local advertisements further comprises the steps of:

transmitting a global data stream [containing] comprising slots reserved for local advertisements to a television distribution facility;

inserting the local advertisements into the global data stream in the reserved slots at the television distribution facility; and

transmitting the local advertisements from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment as part of the global data stream.

34. (Amended) The method defined in claim 24 wherein the step of distributing the local advertisements further comprises the steps of:

transmitting a global data stream [containing] comprising global advertisements and having bandwidth reserved for local advertisements to a television distribution facility;

inserting the local advertisements into the global data stream in the reserved bandwidth at the television distribution facility; and

transmitting the local advertisements and the global advertisements from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment as part of the global data stream.

35. (Amended) The method defined in claim 24 wherein the step of distributing the local advertisements further comprises:

step of transmitting a global data stream [containing] comprising global advertisements to a television distribution facility;

step of transmitting the global data stream from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment; and

step of transmitting the local advertisements from the television distribution facility to the user



television equipment as a separate data stream from the global data stream.

39. (Amended) The method defined in claim 24 wherein the step of [displaying the local advertisements with] using the interactive television program guide to display the local advertisements further comprises the steps of:

displaying a global advertisement that may be selected by a user with the interactive television program guide; and

displaying a corresponding local advertisement with content related to the content of the global advertisement whenever the user selects the global advertisement.

40. (Amended) The method defined in claim 24 wherein the step of [displaying the local advertisements with] using the interactive television program guide to display the local advertisements further comprises the steps of:

displaying a global advertisement that may be selected by a user with the interactive television program guide; and

displaying a corresponding full-screen local advertisement whenever the user selects the global advertisement.

41. (Amended) The method defined in claim 24 wherein the step of [displaying the local advertisements with] using the interactive television program guide to display the local advertisements further comprises the steps of:

displaying global advertisements with the interactive television program guide; and  
cycling the display of the global advertisements and the local advertisements.

42. (Amended) The method defined in claim 24 wherein the step of [displaying the local advertisements with] using the interactive television program guide to display the local advertisements further comprises the steps of:

displaying global banner advertisements with the interactive television program guide; and  
cycling the display of the global banner advertisements and the local advertisements.

46. (Amended) The method defined in claim 24 wherein the step of distributing the local advertisements further comprises the steps of:

transmitting global advertisements and program guide information to a television distribution facility;

providing local advertisements at the television distribution facility;

transmitting the program guide information, the global advertisements, and the local advertisements from the television distribution facility to the user television equipment; displaying the global advertisements with the interactive television program guide; and

displaying a program listings region [containing] comprising the program guide information with the interactive television program guide.

47. (Amended) A system in which advertisements are distributed to user television equipment on which an interactive television program guide is implemented, comprising:

means for distributing the advertisements to the user television equipment, wherein the advertisements include associated content tags that define the content of the advertisements;

means for using the interactive television program guide to process the content tags; and

means for [displaying] using the interactive television program guide to display only some of the advertisements on the user television equipment [with the interactive television program guide] based on the [content of the advertisements] processed content tags.

49. (Amended) The system defined in claim 47 further comprising[:

means for providing the advertisements with content tags indicating the content of the advertisements; and]

means for displaying only those advertisements with desired content tags.

55. (Amended) A method for using a system in which advertisements are distributed to user television equipment on which an interactive television program guide is implemented, comprising the steps of:

distributing the advertisements to the user television equipment, wherein the advertisements include associated content tags that define the content of the advertisements;

using the interactive television program guide to process the content tags; and

[displaying] using the interactive television program guide to display only some of the advertisements on the user television equipment [with the interactive television program guide] based on the [content of the advertisements] processed content tags.

57. (Amended) The method defined in claim 55 further comprising [the steps of:

providing the advertisements with content tags indicating the content of the advertisements; and]  
the step of displaying only those  
advertisements with desired content tags.

63. (Amended) A system in which a television distribution facility is used to distribute advertisements to user television equipment on which an interactive television program guide is implemented, comprising:

means for distributing the advertisements to the television distribution facility;

means for time-shifting at least some of the advertisements with the television distribution facility;  
[and]

means for [displaying the time-shifted advertisements with] using the interactive television program guide to display the time-shifted advertisements;  
and

means for using the interactive television program guide to provide interactive services to a user, wherein the interactive television program guide allows the user to select the time-shifted advertisements.

64. (Amended) A method for using a system in which a television distribution facility is used to distribute advertisements to user television equipment on

which an interactive television program guide is implemented, comprising the steps of:

distributing the advertisements to the television distribution facility;

time-shifting at least some of the advertisements with the television distribution facility;  
[and]

[displaying the time-shifted advertisements with] using the interactive television program guide to display the time-shifted advertisements; and

using the interactive television program guide to provide interactive services to a user, wherein the interactive television program guide allows the user to select the time-shifted advertisements.